

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 050901
ORIGIN NODS-00

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO NIACIT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM NIACIT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV NIACIT IMMED

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NODIS

FOR ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, US, IS, EG

SUBJECT: SADAT'S ORAL MESSAGE TO BEGIN

REF: JERUSALEM 556

1. WE HAVE CONSIDERED CAREFULLY YOUR VERY GOOD PROPOSALS
AND RELATED COMMENTS FROM EILTS AND LEWIS FOR HOW TO
HANDLE WITH SADAT THE QUESTION OF HIS ORAL MESSAGE. WE
CONCUR WITH YOUR APPROACH, WITH ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BELOW.
WE ARE SENDING YOU, SEPTEL, A REVISION OF THE EARLIER
DRAFT OF SADAT MESSAGE, AS A STAFF-LEVEL EFFORT TO GIVE
YOU SOME FEEL OF WHERE MESSAGE MIGHT BEST BE SOFTENED.
THE PURPOSE IS SIMPLY TO GET A SADAT MESSAGE LEAST
DAMAGING IN TERMS OF BEGIN ADVERSE REACTION, E.G., WITH-
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 050901

DRAWAL OF HIS SINAI PROPOSAL.

2. YOU MAY WANT TO PUT YOUR COMMENTS IN LARGER CONTEXT
PER THIS PARA. WE ARE CONCERNED WITH EFFECT NOT ONLY ON
PRESENT DELICATE STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS BUT ON UPCOMING
BEGIN VISIT AND ON ARMS PACKAGE. YOU SHOULD NOTE MAJOR
ADVANCE IN U.S. POLICY ARMS PACKAGE REPRESENTS, EXTENT OF

PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENT IT IMPLIES, AND MAJOR POLITICAL EFFORT IT ENTAILS WITH CONGRESS AND PUBLIC. YOU WILL

UNDERSTAND AND CAN SAY HOW NEGATIVE ELEMENTS OF MESSAGE COULD BE USED TO UNDERCUT OUR PRINCIPLE OBJECTIVES BOTH ON ARMS PACKAGE AND IN BEGIN VISIT. CONVERSELY, A GOOD SADAT MESSAGE WILL BE HELPFUL ON BOTH SCORES. RE BEGIN VISIT HERE, WE SEE IT AS A VERY IMPORTANT STAGE IN EFFORT TO PERSUADE BEGIN TO SADAT'S AND OUR MUTUAL OBJECTIVE-- ACCEPTANCE OF BASIC PRINCIPLES INCLUDING CENTRALLY WITHDRAWAL ON ALL FRONTS INCLUDING WEST BANK/GAZA. THIS WILL BE A CRITICAL AND FOR BEGIN, EMOTIONALLY AND POLITICALLY, A VERY DIFFICULT MOMENT. WE FRANKLY NEED SADAT'S HELP IN SETTING STAGE FOR THIS VISIT IN THE MOST PROPITIOUS WAY. SUNDAY'S CABINET SESSION ON SETTLEMENTS, AS BEGIN HAS COMMUNICATED DECISIONS TO SADAT SHOW THAT BEGIN IS, NOW, BEGINNING TO FACE KEY ISSUES AND ISRAELI POLITICS ARE IN SIGNIFICANT FLUX. (WE ASSUME YOU ARE USING TEL AVIV 2624 AND 2633 WITH SADAT.) WE HOPE SADAT WILL CONSIDER THE BEST WAY AT THIS TIME BOTH TO MAKE POINTS IMPORTANT TO HIM AND HELP US IN PREPARATION FOR BEGIN VISIT.

3. SINAI II PROBLEM: FYI WE THINK IT CRUCIAL THIS ISSUE NOT BE RAISED AT THIS TIME AND HOPE SADAT CAN BE BROUGHT TO AGREE, WHILE DEFERRING FOR THE MOMENT THE NO LESS

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 050901

SERIOUS QUESTION, WHICH WILL HAVE TO BE CLEARED UP WITH HIM LATER, OF WHAT HIS COMMITMENTS ARE UNDER SINAI II. END FYI. YOU SHOULD TELL SADAT SECRETARY STRONGLY URGES THAT NOTHING BE SAID ABOUT SINAI II EXPIRATION AT THIS TIME. IT WOULD BADLY UNDERCUT OUR CENTRAL GOAL OF PRESSING BEGIN ON WITHDRAWAL COMMITMENT UNDER 242. IT WOULD INEVITABLY LEAK AND GIVE BEGIN A DIVERSIONARY ISSUE IN ISRAELI AND AMERICAN POLITICS HARMFUL TO SADAT'S PRESENT STRONG POSITION HERE AND WEAKENING PRESSURES ON BEGIN IN ISRAEL TOWARD FLEXIBILITY. WE SHOULD NOT GIVE BEGIN AT THIS TIME ANY PRETEXT FOR CHARGING SADAT WITH THREATENING HIM. WE WOULD HOPE HE WOULD AT LEAST CONSULT WITH US AGAIN BEFORE FURTHER DISCUSSION PUBLIC OR PRIVATE OF SINAI II ISSUE.

4. RE BEGIN'S ASSURANCE TO PRESIDENT CARTER IN DECEMBER THAT ISRAEL'S SOVEREIGNTY WILL NOT EXCEED 1967 BORDERS, RECORD OF DECEMBER BEGIN VISIT IS AT VARIANCE FROM YOUR PARA 2 (L) REFTEL. YOU SHOULD NOTE THAT BEGIN HAS ALREADY ACKNOWLEDGED EGYPTIAN SOVEREIGNTY IN SINAI. REGARDING WEST BANK, BEGIN'S STATEMENT REFERRED ONLY TO ISRAELI WILLINGNESS EXPRESSED IN BEGIN PLAN NOT TO ASSERT ISRAELI

SOVEREIGNTY DURING INTERIM 5-YEAR PERIOD BEYOND THE 1967 BORDER. YOU SHOULD URGE HIM NOT TO RAISE THIS POINT AT THIS TIME AS GIVING BEGIN A PRETEXT FOR ARGUING WITH THE

U.S. ABOUT AN ESSENTIALLY DIVERSIONARY ISSUE.

5. WE ARE INCLINED TO BE MORE RECEPTIVE THAN YOUR PARA.
2 (I) REFTEL. WE SEE NO REASON NOT TO CONVEY SADAT'S UNHAPPINESS THAT, DESPITE ALL HIS EFFORT TO CUT THROUGH TO BASIC ISSUES AND REACH AGREEMENT, NEGOTIATIONS GET DIVERTED INTO PROCEDURAL ISSUES SUCH AS WHEN AND WHERE POLITICAL COMMITTEE IS TO MEET; SUBCOMMITTEES AND AGENDA FOR SUBCOMMITTEES; PROTRACTED AND DETAILED DISCUSSION OF LANGUAGE WHICH ONLY OBSCURES BASIC ISSUES. WE UNDERSTAND

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 050901

SADAT'S CONCERN ON THIS ISSUE AND BELIEVE IT USEFUL TO CONVEY THEM.

6. FOR EILTS: IF YOU HAVE TO TALK TO KAMEL PRIOR TO ATHERTON'S ARRIVAL, WE HOPE YOU CAN GO AS LIGHTLY AND GENERALLY AS POSSIBLE IN DISCUSSING BEFORE YOU AND ATHERTON HAVE CHANCE TO CONSULT FULLY. VANCE

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